

REMARKS:

Claims 1-36 are now pending in the application, with claims 1 and 30 being the independent claims. Reconsideration and further examination are respectfully requested. In the present Office Action, finally rejecting all claims, it is asserted that the U.S. Patent 4,356,643 (Kester) anticipated independent claim 1, in its form prior to the present amendment. Specifically, it is asserted that gaps between individual nylon fibers 18 in Kester correspond to the previously recited limitation: "at least a portion of each of the plurality of indentations is not coated with said small particles."

Applicant continues to believe that such a broad construction of the previous claim language would have been unreasonable. However, for the sole purpose of eliminating any possibility of such an argument, Applicant has amended independent claim 1 above to instead recite that "each of the plurality of indentations is predominantly uncoated with said small particles."

This feature in the invention is supported, e.g., in Figure 4 and at page 12 line 24 through page 13 line 2 of the Specification, and is not disclosed or suggested by the applied art. That is, the applied art does not disclose or suggest a plurality of indentations that are predominantly uncoated while a plurality of lower-extending portions are coated.

Accordingly, independent claim 1 is believed to be allowable over the applied art. Newly added independent claim 30 recites, inter alia, "a plurality of small particles bonded differentially to different areas of the bottom surface, with each of a plurality of the lower extending portions being coated more than each of the plurality of indentations." This feature the invention also is supported, e.g., in Figure 4 and at page 12 line 24 through page 13 line 2 of the Specification, and is not disclosed or suggested by the applied art.

The other claims in the application depend from the independent claims discussed above, and are therefore believed to be allowable for at least the same reasons. Because each dependent claim also defines an additional aspect of the invention, however, the individual consideration/reconsideration of each on its own merits is respectfully requested.

In order to sufficiently distinguish Applicant's invention from the applied art, the foregoing remarks emphasize several of the differences between the applied art and Applicant's invention. However, no attempt has been made to categorize each unobvious difference. Applicant's invention comprises all of the elements and all of the interrelationships between those elements recited in the claims. It is believed that for each claim the combination of such elements and interrelationships is not disclosed, taught or suggested by the applied art. It is therefore believed that all claims in the application are fully in condition for allowance, and an indication to that effect is respectfully requested.

If there are any fees due in connection with the filing of this paper that have not been accounted for in this paper or the accompanying papers, please charge the fees to our Deposit Account No. 13-3735. If an extension of time under 37 C.F.R. 1.136 is required for the filing of this paper and is not accounted for in this paper or the accompanying papers, such an extension is requested and the fee (or any underpayment thereof) should also be charged to our Deposit Account. A duplicate copy of this page is enclosed for that purpose.

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